THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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CHURCH OF ENGLAND CLERGY DEMAND PAY RISE FOR FIRST TIME IN 500 YEARS

Even the vicars are not immune from the rising cost of living. Unite, the trade union that represents more than 2,000 clergy and lay officers in the Church of England, said on Monday that it has demanded a 9.5% increase in the stipend that the clergy receive, to be paid from April 2024. "The Church of England has billions in the bank and can fully afford to pay its clergy the modest increase in their stipend they are seeking," the trade union added.

IndiGo's jumbo Airbus order

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

INDIGO, India's largest airline by fleet size, placed a mammoth order for 500 Airbus A320 family aircraft at the Paris Air Show on Monday. This is the largest single order placed by any airline with Airbus and surpasses the Tatas owned Air India's order for 470 aircraft placed in March this year.

The deal value for the 500 planes is pegged at $50 billion but IndiGo will get a hefty discount thanks to the huge order size and its long relationship with European aerospace company Airbus.

IndiGo will receive deliveries of these planes between 2030 and 2035. The engine selection for this order will be done in due course and so will the exact mix of A320 and A321 aircraft. For engines, IndiGo will have the option to strike a deal with CFM or Pratt & Whitney.

At present, IndiGo operates about 310 aircraft. It has already placed orders for a total of 480 planes, which will be delivered by the end of 2030. With the additional order of 500 aircraft, IndiGo's order book has nearly 1,000 aircraft to be delivered over the next decade. The order book comprises a mix of A320NEO, A321NEO and A321XLR aircraft.

The airline recently wet-leased (leasing aircraft along with crew and engineers) two-wide body Boeing planes to operate on the India-Turkey route.

IndiGo has aggressive plans for the international market and is said to be in talks with Airbus as well as its rival company Boeing for 25 wide-body planes.

The latest order by IndiGo comes at a time when its market share touched an all-time high of 61.4% in May after Go First suspended operations on May 3 and declared bankruptcy.

This year, IndiGo expects to onboard 10 crore customers which it believes is equivalent to giving wings to the nation.

PM may unveil Rafale-M deal on Bastille Day

Will be guest of honour in France on July 17

SHAHID FARIDI @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi is likely to announce a multi-billion dollar deal to acquire 26 Rafale Marine fighter jets during his visit to France. The Prime Minister will be in France on July 17 as the guest of honour at the Bastille Day parade.

This paper was the first to report that the Indian Navy has expressed its preference for the deck-based French Rafale Marine over the F-18 Super Hornets of the US. Their price is yet to be revealed, but sources said these multi-role carrier-borne fighters will be cheaper than those the Indian Air Force bought earlier. They will be bought through a government-to-government deal instead of taking the open tender route.

The Navy has been scouting for a suitable fighter to be deployed on aircraft carrier INS Vikrant to replace its aging MiG 29Ks. Sources said its quest ended with Dassault's Rafale Marine, which has over 80% features of the IAF's Rafales. The savings that will result on account of training, repairs and maintenance due to the commonality of the fleet made the Navy prefer the French fighter.

Sources said besides the fleet commonality, the Navy brass was impressed by the Rafale-M's capabilities during a joint exercise and the operational demonstration test conducted in India. After the tests, the Navy informed the Defence Ministry that Rafale-M was best suited for its needs. The ministry has worked out a detailed maintenance, spares and training contract, which includes building an on-board maintenance facility on INS Vikrant and one on the ground in Goa. The fighters will be equipped with sophisticated maritime systems, including maritime search radars capable of detecting submarines, besides warships.

India is working on a long-term plan to develop indigenous deck-based fighters in association with HAL. These twin-engine fighters are developed by the Aeronautical Development Agency and will be manufactured by HAL. The aircraft, first displayed at Aero India 2021, will take a few years for deployment. The Navy has, therefore, decided to go in for an outright purchase to meet its short-term needs.

NEW RAW CHIEF

RAVI SINHA TO TAKE OVER FROM SAMANT GOEL

Senior IPS officer Ravi Sinha was appointed as the head of external spy agency RAW on Monday. His appointment comes at a time when Pakistan is politically and economically unstable, and Sikh extremism is being fanned from abroad | P9

Pejawar Mutt pontiff Sri Vishwaprasanna Theertha Swamiji lowers himself into a 40-ft well, in a bid to rescue a cat which had fallen inside, at Mucchlukodu Subrahmanya Temple on the outskirts of Udupi on Sunday | EXPRESS | P4

EXPRESS READ

Congress picks Shettar for Council election

Bengaluru: The Congress nominated former CM Jagadish Shettar for upcoming MLC election. He is among other leaders, including N S Boseraju and Tippannappa Kamaknoor, to have been nominated. All three are likely to be elected unopposed to the upper house | P4

Khalistani radical Nijjar shot dead in Canada

New Delhi: Hardeep Singh Nijjar, the chief of the banned Khalistan Tiger Force, was shot dead in Canada, officials said on Monday. Two unidentified gunmen fired at Nijjar (45), as he was preparing to leave in his vehicle from the parking lot of a gurudwara in Surrey, British Columbia | P9

Priyank lodges plaint against Nadda, Malviya

Bengaluru: Minister for Information Technology and Biotechnology Priyank Kharge on Monday lodged a complaint against BJP national president J P Nadda, IT Cell chief Amit Malviya and BJP Chandigarh chief Arun Sood for alleged malicious posts against senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

Maha support to Goa to halt Mahadayi project

NAUSHAD BIJAPUR @ Belagavi

MERELY days after the change of guard in Karnataka with Congress assuming power, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has expressed his support to the BJP government in Goa against diversion of Mahadayi waters. At a meeting in Mumbai recently, Shinde said that his government will support Goa to prevent diversion of Mahadayi waters by Karnataka to implement its Kalasa-Banduri Nala Project. Goa CM Pramod Sawant also attended the meeting. "Goa and Maharashtra together will fight the Mahadayi issue against Karnataka," Shinde said.

Shinde's statement comes at a time when the Karnataka government obtained official approval to divert Mahadayi waters into the Malaprabha river in the state through Kalasa-Banduri Nala Project.

The Centre has not only cleared the revised detailed project report but has also notified it in the gazette.

Despite this, the Goa government is not leaving any stone unturned to halt Karnataka from diverting water from the Mahadayi river.

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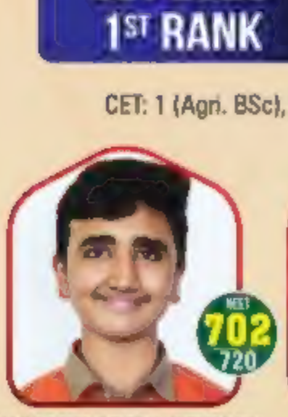

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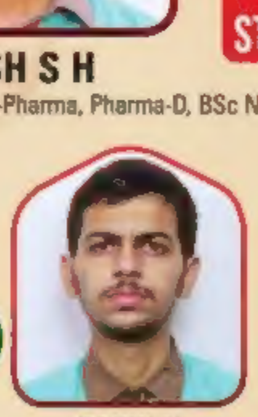

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